

Due Dates: First Version: Fri. 2/13--Two copies + cover letter (and Ex. 1.1, if applicable) at my office. (Workshop students: email drafts to the class as Word attachments.) **Class Workshop: Thurs. 2/19.**

Revision: Fri. 2/27 at my office (2 copies + cover letter+marked-up first version +Ex. 1.1, if applicable)

Suggested length: 4-5 typed pg., double-spaced. For both the first version and revision, please submit **two copies** with a **cover letter** to me reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of the piece. If you develop your draft from exercise 1.1, please include your marked-up exercise. When you submit your revision, please include the marked-up first version with my comments, ex. 1.1 (if applicable) and a cover letter commenting on the ways you've responded to the comments/suggestions of your peers (and myself) and the changes you've made in revision. (While it's important to consider everyone's comments, I don't assume that you will necessarily agree with all the revision suggestions of your reviewers.)

Assignment:

Through exploring a central aspect of your own identity (or the identity of someone close to you), write an essay that reflects on your (or your subject's) experience(s) to connect with issues that speak to a wider audience. In essays like this, it is often most effective to ground your discussion of your (or your subject's) identity in such experience(s) as:

- *a critical event(s) or turning point(s) in life;
- *a specific symbolic moment(s) within a close family or personal relationship;
- *a family or personal ritual or "rite of passage";
- *a meaningful artifact (photo, sentimental object, family heirloom or keepsake).
- * a special or "sacred" place or meaningful journey

Reflect carefully on the voice that you adopt as a writer. Don't assume that first-person narration is your only option; you can write about yourself in the third person, if you wish. Be vivid and descriptive in your prose; use the tools of fiction—character, setting and dialogue. Shape your narrative so that it clearly conveys a perspective or central idea. You may choose to incorporate secondary sources, although they are not required in this piece.

The challenge of this assignment is to shape and frame the raw material of experience and memory for a reading public. Using the lens of experience, you have a rich opportunity as a writer to communicate with readers about a wide variety of topics that evoke a shared sense of humanity.

Note: You may decide to expand or elaborate upon Exercise 1.1. Alternately, you can use 1.1 as a warm-up assignment for another essay or piece of short fiction and write about a different experience for Essay 1.